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# BUILTH URBAN DISTRICT

REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year 1948.

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Officials.

Medical Officer of Health....T.C.R.George, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.,

Sanitary Inspectors.....Mr.Rosser Harries, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A. (part of year)

Mr.E.V.Collins, M.S.I.A. (part of year)

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# BUILTH WELLS URBAN DISTRICT

## Report of the Medical Officer of Health

## 1948

Mr.Chairman,Mrs Davies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my annual report on the sanitary conditions and the state of the public health in the Builth Wells Urban District for the year 1948.

In the preparation of this report I have endeavoured to deal briefly with all matters within my responsibility regarding public health and preventive medicine and I have included all the subjects specifically requested by the Welsh Board of Health in Circular 3/49 (Wales).

The year under review witnessed the coming into operation of various extremely important Acts,such as the National Health Service Act,1946,and the National Assistance Act 1948.

These Acts have produced great changes in the work of public health administration and have revolutionised the medical and hospital services throughout the country.The Local Health Authority under these Acts,is,in Breconshire,the County Council.

## SECTION 1. GENERAL AND VITAL STATISTICS.

### Statistical Summary for the year 1948.

Area.....701 acres.
Population (Census 1931).....1663.
Population (estimated at Midsummer,1948).....1707.
Number of inhabited houses.....524.

| Live Births. | Males. | Females. | Total. | Rate per 1000 Pop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Legitimate | 11. | 15. | 26. | |
| Illegitimate | 0. | 1. | 1. | |
| | 11. | 16. | 27. | 15.8 |
| Still Births. | 2. | 0. | 2. | 1.1 |
| Deaths from all causes. | 10. | 9. | 19. | 11.1 |

Maternal Deaths.....Nil.

Deaths under 1 year.
....0. Rate per 1000 live births.....0

Deaths from special causes.
Infectious disease.....Nil.
Tuberculosis of respiratory system.....Nil.
Other tuberculous disease.....Nil.
Cancer.....7.

### Area.

The Urban District of Builth Wells,which has an area of 701 acres,is situated in the northern part of the County of Breconshire.The surrounding country is agricultural in nature and farming is the predominant occupation of the surrounding residents.The district is also a holiday resort where advantage is taken of the medicinal springs in the neighbourhood.

## BUILTH WELLS URBAN DISTRICT

POPULATION. Census 1931.....1663.

| 1939. | 1940. | 1941. | 1942. | 1943. | 1944. | 1945. | 1946. | 1947. | 1948. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1500. | 1644. | 1831. | 1730. | 1645. | 1631. | 1617. | 1576. | 1539. | 1707. |

The above figures are the Registrar General's figures for the various years and apply only to the civilian population.

It would appear that the population has increased since the last census was taken.
The number of inhabited houses in the district was 524 giving an average number of 3.1 persons per house.

| Births. | Males. | Females. | Total. | Rate. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1938 | | | 20 | 13.2. |
| 1939 | | | 22 | 14.6. |
| 1940 | 7 | 9 | 16 | 9.7. |
| 1941 | 11 | 12 | 23 | 12.6. |
| 1942 | 11 | 11 | 22 | 12.7. |
| 1943 | 11 | 11 | 22 | 13.4. |
| 1944 | 15 | 8 | 23 | 14.1. |
| 1945 | 12 | 11 | 23 | 14.2. |
| 1946 | 10 | 13 | 23 | 14.6. |
| 1947 | 22 | 14 | 36 | 23.3. |
| 1948 | 11 | 16 | 27 | 15.8. |
| England and Wales, 1948 | | | | 17.9. |

The birthrate was lower than the average for England and Wales.

DEATHS.

After taking into account the outwardly and inwardly transferable deaths the net number of deaths registered amongst residents in the district is shown in the following table.

| | Males. | Females. | Total. | Rate. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1938 | | | 19 | 12.5. |
| 1939 | | | 25 | 16.2. |
| 1940 | 13 | 21 | 34 | 20.6. |
| 1941 | 14 | 17 | 31 | 16.8. |
| 1942 | 17 | 11 | 28 | 16.1. |
| 1943 | 19 | 20 | 39 | 23.7. |
| 1944 | 8 | 12 | 20 | 12.2. |
| 1945 | 4 | 10 | 14 | 8.6. |
| 1946 | 18 | 14 | 32 | 20.3. |
| 1947 | 13 | 12 | 25 | 16.2. |
| 1948 | 10 | 9 | 19 | 11.1. |
| England and Wales, 1948 | | | | 10.8. |

The deathrate for 1948 was therefore higher than the average for the whole of England and Wales, but was lower than the birthrate.

STILL BIRTHS.

| | Males. | Females. | Total. | Rate. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1938 | | | 0 | 0. |
| 1939 | | | 1 | 0.6. |
| 1940 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0.6. |
| 1941 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0. |
| 1942 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0. |
| 1943 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1.8. |
| 1944 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0. |
| 1945 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1.2. |

Builth Wells Urban District

STILL BIRTHS.

| | Males. | Females. | Total. | Rate. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19[illegible] | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3.1. |
| 1947 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1.3. |
| 1948 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1.1. |

England and Wales, 1948 ..... 0.42.

The stillbirth rate for 1948 was therefore considerably higher than the average for the whole of England and Wales.

INFANTILE MORTALITY. This is the number of deaths occurring in children of under one year of age. The rate is calculated per 1000 live births.

| | Males. | Females. | Total. | Rate. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1938 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0. |
| 1939 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0. |
| 1940 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0. |
| 1941 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0. |
| 1942 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 136. |
| 1943 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 136. |
| 1944 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 43. |
| 1945 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0. |
| 1946 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 43. |
| 1947 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 27. |
| 1948 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0. |
| England and Wales, 1948 | | | | 34. |

The infantile mortality rate was lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales.

Analysis of Causes of Deaths. Males....10. Females....9.

| Cause. | Males. | Females. |
|---|---|---|
| Cancer Stomach | 1 | 1. |
| Cancer Breast | 0 | 1. |
| Cancer other sites | 1 | 3. |
| Intracranial Vascular lesions | 2 | 0. |
| Heart Disease | 5 | 3. |
| Digestive Diseases | 0 | 1. |
| Nephritis | 1 | 0. |

The deaths are classified under the headings given in the new Abridged List of Causes of Deaths.

ILLEGITIMACY. The number of illegitimate births registered as belonging to residents in the district during 1948 amounted to 1.

MATERNAL MORTALITY. There was no death in the year which could be attributed to childbirth.

SECTION 2. GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES.

Public Health Officers. Certain changes occurred during the year in your officers. Mr W. Rosser Harries left the employment of the Council and he was replaced as Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor by Mr. E.V. Collins on December 1st. Mr. Collins continued in this office until the end of the year.

## Builth Wells Urban District

Laboratory Facilities. During the year laboratory facilities were available at Cardiff, Newport, Carmarthen, Swansea, Aberystwyth, Builth and Brecon. All water samples were sent to the Public Analyst for the County at Carmarthen whilst any investigation required in the control of infectious disease was performed by the Public Health Laboratory at Cardiff. The laboratory of the National Milk Testing and Advisory Scheme was available at Builth Wells and Brecon.

Ambulance Facilities. As a result of the new National Health Service Act, 1946, certain changes became operative in the arrangements existing for the conveyance of sick persons in the district. The County Council became responsible for the provision of an ambulance service and made use of the existing St. John's Ambulance for general use while ambulances from Merthyr Isolation Hospital conveyed patients suffering from infectious disease to hospital.

Home Nursing. Under the new Health Act, the County Council became responsible for the provision of home nursing facilities. The nurses previously partly employed by various district nursing associations became whole time employees of the County Council and district nursing associations, as such, ceased to function.

Treatment Centres and Clinics. Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics, administered by the County Council are held regularly at Park House, Park Road. Ante natal clinics, immunisation clinics and facilities for the treatment of minor ailments, dental, eye and orthopaedic defects are also available.

Hospitals. The hospital needs of the residents of the district for all diseases apart from infectious disease are provided by the Builth Wells Hospital. The arrangements for the treatment of infectious disease remain the same as in previous years. Merthyr Borough treat the patients suffering from infectious disease at Mardy Isolation Hospital. These arrangements are proving extremely satisfactory.

For the treatment of smallpox arrangements have been made by the County Council with Aberdare for beds at the Fedw Hir Hospital. During the year the hospitals in the County became state owned and controlled.

Disinfection. In the main the methods used for the disinfection required have been fumigation and spraying.

## SECTION 3. MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

These services are administered by the County Council and include clinics for maternity and child welfare, dental, eye and orthopaedic treatment and for expectant mothers. Provision is also made for the supply of free and cheap rate milk and medicinal foods. The supervision of midwives, child life protection and the care of premature and illegitimate infants is the responsibility of the County Council. During the year the County Council became responsible for the immunisation of children against diphtheria.

SECTION 4. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

Water Supply. The Town is supplied by (1) Tycapel reservoir which is an impounding reservoir to the open moorland catchment area. (2) Newry Well which derives water from a Spring. (3)Hengwm Spring which is a piped supply to the Brecon Road Storage Reservoir (4) Pantyllyn which is an upland lake and only used in case of emergency.(5) A Mobile Pump has been purchased by the Council to supplement the towns water supply should occasion arise. This pump is capable of pumping far in excess of 60,000 gallons per day which will meet the needs of the community.The pumping site will probably be at Cwmnantgwynne Farm on the Brecon Road where water from a brook can be pumped into the main,this water will pass through the mechanised filters and the chlorination plant. There was no shortage of water during the year.
The Bacteriological examinations of the water during the year were in general found to be satisfactory.
The water is inclined to have a slightly plumbo solvent action on lead but all pipes are of galvanised iron and therefore this danger does not arise.
Every effort is made to maintain a pure supply of water by protecting the various sources from likelyhood of contamination. Regular inspections are made of the moorland catchment area for evidence of dead sheep etc.
All houses in the district are supplied direct with a domestic piped supply,with the exception of 15 houses which are supplied with a communal standpipe.
Forty additional Council houses have a piped water supply.

Number of samples taken during the year.....20.
Number reported as satisfactory.....16.
Number reported as unsatisfactory.....4.
No chemical examination was made during the year.
Number of visits made by the sanitary inspector to water supplies.87.

Drainage and Sewerage. The sewage in the district is not treated in any way but is discharged direct into the River Wye below the town.
Several minor improvements to the drainage system were effected during the year such as the provision of inspection chambers and vent shafts.The Council are preparing a scheme for the conversion of 12 houses in Tan house Terrace to a water carriage system.

Public Cleansing. There was no change in the methods adopted for the collection of refuse.This is collected once a week by your Council staff and disposed of by tipping.During the year the purchase of a covered 2 ton Austin lorry at a cost of approximately £900 was decided upon.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area. The sanitary inspection of the area was undertaken by your sanitary inspector.The following details give information relating to the work of the sanitary inspector during the year.

Nuisances.

Number of complaints received.....13.
Number of complaints investigated.....13.
Number of premises inspected.....135.
Number of premises revisited.....83.
Number of preliminary notices served.....19.
Number of statutory notices served.....1.

Houses let in lodgings. It is not considered that any of the houses in the district are of such a nature as to require control under byelaws made under section 6 of the Housing Act,1936.

Offensive Trades. There are no offensive trades in the district.

Common Lodging Houses. There are no common lodging houses in the district.

Licensed Premises.

Number of visits made by the sanitary inspector.....15.
Number of notices served.....1.

Factories.

Number of factories on register.....29.
Number of inspections made.....50.
Number of defects found.....0.

Camping Sites. There is no recognised camping site in the district.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS AND STEPS TAKEN TO COMBAT INFESTATION.

Number of premises inspected.....2.
Number of premises disinfested.....2.

Rodent Control. This work is undertaken by one of the Councils' workmen.

The Cilmerry refuse tip was treated in June,when the estimated number of rats killed was 200,and 80 bodies were found.The sewers were treated in August when there were no takes of bait.

Number of premises inspected during the year.....123.
Number of premises found infested.....4.

Legal Proceedings. No legal proceedings were undertaken by the Council during the year.

SECTION 5. HOUSING.

The Council completed 40 houses during the year.

SECTION 6. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOODS.

Milk. The testing of milk in the County of Breconshire generally is carried out under the National Milk Testing and Advisory Scheme. Under this scheme milk from each retailer should be tested once a fortnight by the sanitary inspector. The wholesale milk is tested at the various creameries. The laboratories functioning under this scheme are situated in Builth Wells and in Brecon.
Number of cowsheds and dairies inspected.....5.
Number of milk samples taken.....86.
Number reported in Category A.....67.
Number reported in Category B.....7.
Number reported in Category C.....12.

Meat. There is no slaughterhouse in the district. All meat is supplied from the Ministry of Food Slaughtering Point at Llanellwydd. The sanitary inspector occasionally inspected the meat there in the absence of the Builth Rural Sanitary Inspector.

## Builth Wells Urban District.

Food Condemned during the year.

Number of tins condemned.....131.
Number of pounds condemned.....144.

Other Foods.

Food Preparation Rooms (Including Bakehouses).

Number of inspections made by sanitary inspector.....21.
Number of notices served.....0.

Ice Cream Premises.

Number of inspections made by sanitary inspector.....9.

Preserved Food Premises.

Number of inspections made by sanitary inspector.....11.

Fried Fish Shops

Number of inspections made by sanitary inspector.....1.

SECTION 7. PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.
The following number of cases of notifiable disease were reported to me during the year.

Diphtheria.....1 case.
Erysipelas.....2 cases.
Acute Pneumonia.....1 case.
Scarlet Fever.....4 cases.

The District therefore remained free from any epidemic of infectious disease. The case of diptheria was removed to Merthyr Isolation Hospital where it was reported "to be not clinically diptheria, with negative swabs".
The above remaining cases were isolated at home.
Under the new Health Act copies of infectious disease notification are now sent to the County Council and notification fees are refunded by the County Council to the district Council.

Number of cases investigated by sanitary inspector.....8.
Number of revisits.....16.
Number of disinfections.....7.
No death was caused by infectious disease during the year.

Venereal Disease. The County Council has an agreement with the General and Eye Hospital, Swansea, for the treatment of these cases. The tracing of contacts and the following up of defaulters is the responsibility of the County Council.

Tuberculosis. The following details show the position as regards tuberculosis in recent years;

Number of cases on the register at commencement of year.....7.
Number of fresh cases notified during the year.....1.
Number of cases removed as recovered.....1.
Number of cases left on register at end of year.....7.

The number of cases of tuberculosis notified in recent years is shown below;

| 1939. | 1940. | 1941. | 1942. | 1943. | 1944. | 1945. | 1946. | 1947. | 1948. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 5. | 3. | 4. | 3. | 2. | 2. | 3. | 3. | 1 |

Tuberculosis.

The County Council is responsible for the allowances scheme.

Diphtheria Immunisation. As a result of the new Health Act, the County Council became responsible for the immunisation of children against diphtheria and details for the district will be found in the annual report of the County Medical Officer. In December of the year, the County Council took over all these duties from me. Facilities for immunisation are now available at the ordinary Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics and also at the schools during the school medical inspections.

One case of diphtheria was notified during the year, the diagnosis of which was not confirmed.

Yours faithfully,

T.C.R. George,

Medical Officer of Health.